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A

General Epistle

TO ALL THE

CALLED

AND

Chosen of God

With all such as make a Profession of the Blessed Truth as it is in Jesus every where.

Wherein is Comfort to the Feeble-minded, Support to the Weak, and Reproof to the Unruly and Disorderly WALKERS.

With several who som Exhortations and Admonitions, according to the Conditions, States & Growths of such as profess the Truth of God; for the rooting out of that which is Bad, and the stirring up of the pure Mind in all, that God may be glorified over all.

Written in the Movings of the Spirit of Life and Love from God in me, who am resolved by the Power of his Might, with you that abide faithful, to follow the Lord fully,

JAMES PARKE.

Printed in the Year, 1676.

A GENERAL EPISTLE TO ALL THE Called & Chosen of God

Dear Friends, Brethren and Sisters;

WHO are made Partakers of the Love, Life and Power of God, by turning to and believing in the Glorious Light of Christ Jesus, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth; My Dear and Stedfast Love is to you all: I am daily more and more affected with the Power of God manifested in you, and the living Operation of it, as it blessedly appears, to turn every one of you from the Evil of your Wayes, to God, and his Glorious, Living and Standing Way, which blasts and stains, and yet will more and more blast and stain all other Wayes, and the seeming Glory of them that are dead, and keep people in Death, and from the Path of Life, which leads to Life, and preserves in the pure Life of Jesus the Son of God and brings out of the Unstableness, Error & Going Astray, to have the Heart fixed upon the Lord God, and to

love and live in the Immortal Truth of God, which was before Error, Falſhood & Going Aſtray was. You that are come to know this bleſſed Way of Truth, O love it, love it for evermore; ſee that you err not by wandring or ſtraying from it, or turning aſide into any By-path, and ſo loſe your firſt Love, and fall from your firſt Stedfaſtneſs; for, the Way of Truth is a ſtedfaſt ſtanding Way, over all the falſe wayes, who ever wander or perish from it, it ſtands and remains the ſame forever, and is the Path of the Juſt, that ſhines, and ſhall ſhine more and more unto the perfect Day, over all the wayes of the Wicked and paths of the Unjuſt, and all the envious Perſecutors, that tear after their Prey, hurting and deſtroying one another in the falſe unprofitable Ways & barren Mountains, where long they have wandered from Chriſt Jeſus, *the Way, the Truth and the Life*; and ſo are alwayes kept from God, and the Knowledge of his everlaſting Way. But Glory to God forever, *Dear Friends*, the Only True God you know, and Chriſt Jeſus, whom he hath ſent to lead to himſelf, and to lead out of the World, its Wayes Faſhions, Cuſtoms and the Wickedneſs that the World lieth in. So look not back again in the leaſt Degree to *Egypt*'s Wayes, the vain and unprofitable Wayes, Words, Manners, Faſhions, Cuſtoms or Traditions of the *Heathen* that know not God, but lie in their Wickedneſs, adding Sin to Sin, bringing up one Vain Way, Faſhion, Cuſtom and Tradition after another, which pleaſeth and taketh up the vain looſe Mind, that loves to be at eaſe in the Fleſh, and lives above the Croſs of Chriſt;

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ſuch love beſt the broad way, wherein, though they have a little Eaſe for a few dayes, but if they Repent not, they will aſſuredly meet with *Death and Deſtruction everlaſtingly, as a Reward due to them for loving and walking in the broad way of Sin, and hating and deſpiſing the Way of Life.* Therefore keep out of the World's wayes, keep out of the way of the Ungodly, which leads from keeping in the daily Croſs, into the luſts of the world, faſhions of the world, words of the world, the luſts of the fleſh and pride of life; theſe things you know are not of God, our Father; but they are of the world, and kept up in the love and by the ſpirit of the world, and the world paſſeth away, its ſpirit is ſeen by you; as you keep in the Light of Chriſt Jeſus, you are kept out of the world's ſpirit, that luſts to Envy and after evil things: This ſpirit keeps people walking after their ungodly Luſts, one luſting after one Evil, and another after another Evil Thing: And by this ſpirit how is Sin committed with Greedineſs, and Men and Womens Reins let looſe to act all manner of Wickedneſs, and to run into every Evil they luſt after! ſo that many ſeem without Bridle to ſtay them from any ſenſual Deſire that by the ſpirit of the world ariſeth in them. Therefore, *Dear Friends,* you Children of God and of his Day, be wiſe and ſober, always having God's Fear before your Eyes; Let none of you in the leaſt adhere to the ſpirit of the world, that draws back into the world, and love of the things of the world again; for ſuch will have an Eye out, towards worldly Delights & Pleaſures, and be taken up therewith;

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then the ſweet ſavoury words are loſt, & ſo the ſenſe of Life is loſt alſo, the Pleaſures that ſuch have had in the Truth they loſe the lively ſenſe of; then is the Enemy let in as a Flood, and the Spirit of God not felt to lift up a Standard againſt him; ſo the Soul's Enemy prevails greatly againſt ſuch, to the loſing of their firſt Love and Stedfaſtneſs they had to God, and his Truth and People; and when the firſt Love to God is left, there is a Loſs of Stedfaſtneſs in the Truth of God, and the Work of the Day not well minded, but the Mind after the World, and the things thereof, and that befets and clogs, and ſo lieth ſo heavy upon the Conſcience that it darkens, hardens, and if not laid aſide in due time, ſears the Conſcience, that hath been good and tender. Now, them who are in that State, can take up that which they once did lay down for Truth's ſake, and in Obedience to its Requirings, building again the things they deſtroyed, and matter not whether they keep to the true Language or not, but will ſpeak it to faithful Friends and not to others, and ſo uſe their Liberty (as may be they call it) as an Occaſion to the Fleſh in Corrupt Words and Falſe Language, contrary to *Thee* and *Thou* to a Particular, which was the Language of all the Holy Men of God mentioned in the Scriptures, and *You* to more then one, or many; but ſome can take up an Eaſe in ſpeaking *You* to one, but its fleſhly, and not ſpiritual, it is of the Earth, and is earthly, and renders them to be at Eaſe in *Sion*: and this is written in the Love of God, That every one profeſſing the Truth of God, that have uſed ſuch a Liberty,

Liberty, may deny themſelves of it, and take up a daily Croſs to it, that ſo that Liberty may be ſeen to be Bondage to the god & ſpirit of this world, whereby the Unfaithful to the Truth of God are vailed, and ſo keep not clear nor pure their Conſciences towards God or men, as to the Language of Truth, and Faithfulneſs therein: Certainly God's holy Spirit is grieved, eſpecially with thoſe who have been long convinced of the pure Truth of God, and yet give ſuch way to the Enemy's Temptations, as that thereby they are kept out of the Language of Truth; ſo not being faithful in a little, or the leſſer things, that God hath by his Spirit led his People into, & bleſſed them in, how can ſuch expect to be Rulers over much, or ſee much of the Glory of God, that he hath revealed in theſe latter dayes?

And *Dear Brethren and Siſters*, ſeeing you are called with a holy Calling unto Liberty, let none uſe it as an Occaſion to the Fleſh; let not the Liberty you uſe be fleſhly, but ſpiritual; then none will take liberty in Words or Actions contrary to the Truth, and the Spirit that led you into it; nor none will be Heady or High-minded, for that is out of Truth and the Spirit of it, and goes before a Fall, and they are not near in Relation to God, nor like unto Chriſt Jeſus, that are High-minded; neither do they feel the Lord to dwell in them and with them, although they may have Taſtes of his Goodneſs, and be ſenſible of his Power at ſome times. Now, it is the Heady and High-minded that will not ſubmit to the Spirit's Rule, Order and Government in the Heart, and ſo would

would ſet up ſomething of Fleſh, ſomething of Man, and rob the Spirit and Power of God of what belongs thereunto, and ſo all the bad Rule and Diſorder in Government got up, and is kept up in the World; Fleſh would rule, and have the Preeminence inwardly and outwardly; and who are high minded, they love to have the Preeminence, they love Lordſhip and Superiority above their Fellow-Servants, and will ſmite them that are of lower degree, whom they ought to cherith and condeſcend unto: Now ſaith the Apoſtle, *I would have no man to think of himſelf otherwayes then what is meet, but every one to think lowly of himſelf, to abaſe and humble himſelf, as did our Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus*: A lively Pattern for all to look at, to be ſo minded, and to follow his Steps, in his Humiliation, and enduring the Croſs patiently, deſpiſing all the Shame and Reproach he met with whilſt in a viſible Body of Fleſh in the world. Friends, he hath left us an Example, that we all might follow his ſteps, and mark his ſteps, that never ſtept into any Evil, nor was Guile found in his Mouth; & there will be no Headineſs then, there will be no giving way to the Luſts of the world, the luſts of the Fleſh, nor the Pride of Life, but all that (with the Light & Spirit of Grace) will be ſeen, and judg'd to be out of the Steps of Chriſt, that we are required to follow; ſo the things come to be purſued and followed which make for Peace in the particular and in the general: ſo all high Thoughts and Vain Conceits will be judged down, and ſhut out with the Power of the Living God; and all Exceſs and Unneceſſary Things,

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uſed by any that profeſs the Truth, either in Meats Drinks, or Apparel, will be denyed and come out of; and there will be no faſhioning themſelves like the World, nor getting into their Fantaſtick Garbs, and fooliſh vain Faſhions, as they are brought in, but all will be kept to modeſt and plain Attire, ſuch as becomes the Truth of God, and was in times paſt; for ſome are greatly to be blamed who make a Profeſſion of Truth, who let their Eye after every Faſhion, almoſt as ſoon as it appears, Women appearing in Attire immodeſt, and unbecoming the plain Truth of our God, both in City and Country; and I write this that they may be aſham'd that are guilty in this matter, without any Reflection upon them that are clear and innocent, as I know a Remnant are both in City and Country, Glory to the Lord God forever, who hath made his Power known, and ſubjected the Minds of a Remnant ſo to it, that their Communication and Converſation is honeſt before God, and amongſt men, and is as becomes the Goſpel, and as thoſe that follow the Steps of Chriſt Jeſus, who dwell in the Power of God. You are the Lord's Jewels (my dear Friends and Brethren) O you are the purified! It's you that are made Holy Veſſels fit for God, and his Heavenly Treaſure, and that retain the Heavenly Treaſure in your Earthen Veſſels, it's you that come to walk with God in white; for you are worthy, when ſome walk after their Ungodly Luſts, and after the Courſe of the World, *whoſe God is their Belly, who glory in their Shame, and mind Earthly Things.* Therefore as any Root of

Pride, High mindedneſs, Self- conceits, or Bitterneſs would ſpring up in any, let the Ax be laid to it; or whatever Evil Root thou mayſt find yet ſtanding in thee, or which would again ſpring up in thee, dally not with it, give it up to the Sword, and ſpare it not, and ſo feel the Wicked bowed before the Juſt in thy own particular; not only the wicked Branches of the evil Tree, but the Root alſo, then will thy cumbering Thoughts be gone, then thou wilt not be overcome with Surfeiting, Drunkenneſs or Cares of this World, but wilt be ſenſible, aware of the Day of the Lord, and wilt do the Works of the Day and not of the Night, or Darkneſs, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Ye are not in Darkneſs as others, that that Day would overtake you as unawares; for you are all the Children of Light, and of the Day*; and how unbecoming is it for ſuch to be overtaken with a VVork of Darkneſs or to walk in Darkneſs; for none are overtaken in VVorks of Darkneſs, but by walking in Darkneſs, and being ſubject to the dark Power of the Prince of Darkneſs, then Pride is not ſeen to be Pride, but called Decency, Civility, good Breeding and good Manners; then Paſſion is not ſeen to be Paſſion, but accounted Fervency of Zeal to God, and Darkneſs thus covering, and overpowering the Creature, ſuch can keep evil Company, more then doth them good, yet ſay, they cannot avoid it, my Buſineſs, Affairs and Intereſt lies in keeping all Sorts of Company, and if I do not, my Imployment and outward Calling is at Stake. O you that know the Power of the Lord, every where! be ſubject to

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that, let that good Power rule in you, to the overpowering and throwing down the Power of the man of Sin, then by no enticement of any man, high or low which thou mayst have Occasion with in Dealing, or otherwise, wilt thou be drawn into that, that offends God or hurts thy own Soul: Hadst thou not better come to hurt or loss in thy Trade, or outward Business, then to come to hurt or loss, as to thy immortal Soul; the Salvation thereof certainly is our greatest Interest, and ought to be preferred before, and far beyond all outward Interests or Advantages in this present World whatsoever: So we all ought to seek that most, and first, which is of greatest Weight, the setting up and Establishment of the Kingdom of God. O to know that it's come with Power, and to be kept in Subjection to the Power of it, that's more then all, Friends, being in this none is lifted up above his Measure, nor puffed up in high Conceits of themselves; that they are what in Deed and in Truth they are not; for as every one knows the Kingom of God come in Power, and the Mind being purely subjected to the Rule and Government of the Spirit, and Power of God come and set up within us, so the Loftiness of Man comes to be laid low, and every high Thought and vain Imagination brought down into Subjection, then not Flesh, but the Spirit and Power of the living God hath the Dominion: Thus when the other Lords, that formerly had Dominion over us, and that dark Power, whereby they ruled in us, comes to be subdued, the Lord alone is exalted in that Day.

O dear Friends! this is an acceptable Day, this is a Day of Salvation and pure Rejoycing; hereby you know your Marriage-Union with the Lord God, and being joyned to him in a perpetual Covenant, that cannot be broken, but ſtands ſure & firm in all Points, as you who are faithful do witneſs it, and it is you only, that can ſay experimentally, David *wants not a Man to ſit upon his Throne, for your Eyes have ſeen the King in his Beauty, even the Lord of Hoſts, the Righteous Branch*, God promiſed to raiſe up unto *David* that ſhould rule and proſper, and execute Judgement and Juſtice in the Earth, and the Eccho and Cry of your waſhed and purified Hearts is *Glory, Glory to him which was, is, and is to come, becauſe he hath taken to him his great Power, and reigns in Power, Glory and Majeſty in you*, whileſt the World and Profeſſors thereof, pleaſe themſelves with a Talk of his Coming without them, putting afar off his Appearance, and Coming in his Kingdom in them; they will not have him to rule in them, but will ſuffer the Devil and Sin to rule and reign rather then Chriſt Jeſus, whoſe Right it is to rule and reign in every Man and VVoman's Heart, and ſuch are kept afar off from God, and not made nigh unto him, and they are far from the Kingdom of his Dear Son Chriſt Jeſus. But dear Friends who are begotten to God, and have been kept faithful to the word of God's Power in its Appearance nigh in your Hearts and Mouthes, and have in unfeigned Love, and out of a pure Heart obeyed and done it, you are made nigh to God through the Death of his Son Chriſt Jeſus,

ſus, you have ſuffered and known a Dying with him, you have born in your Bodies the Dying of the Lord Jeſus, therefore you muſt reign with him, and ſit upon the Throne of Glory and Majeſty on high with him.

O you faithful Followers of the Lamb in the Regeneration, you Conquerers and Overcomers of the Power of the Devil, and the Sin that did beſet you in times paſt, you already feel a Reward in your Boſoms, for your reſiſting of Sin to the Death of it, and for your reſiſting of the Devil in the Spirit and Power of God, ſo that you have known him put to flight from time to time, when he hath come to tempt you to Sin and Evil; you that have not entered into temptation, but have kept pure, clean, and undefiled, the Reward you have received already, and are receiving your hundred-fold here in this VVorld, is but little to what God hath in Store for you, and promiſed to give unto you in the VVorld to come; you Overcomers and Conquerers through God's Everlaſting Power, you ſhall all ſit with Chriſt on his Throne of Glory and Majeſty on high, as he overcame and ſate down with God the Father on his Throne; here is Preferment and Honour that comes from above; for you have humbled and abaſed your ſelves, and have been abaſed by Men, but God will raiſe you up, and is ſetting the poor on high. O what greater Dignity can you have, then come to ſit with Chriſt on his Throne, when others content themſelves with a Talk of Chriſt, with a formal Profeſſion of him, without Life and Power, or leaving

leaving any thing for Christ; you have seen it your Duty incumbent upon you to leave and forsake all Sin and Evil for Christ's Sake, and to dye to your own Wills and Righteousness for Christ's Sake, that you might be made conformable to him, and be dead and buried in Baptism with him, and so through the Death of the first Earthly *Adam*, you have obtained Life in the second *Adam*, and so serve, obey and live unto God, by a daily dying to Sin and its Law, that warred in your Members against the Law of your Minds, whereby in times past you were led captive, and could not do the things you would; but now Glory to the Lord God forever, you Conquerers by Christ Jesus, Victory is given unto you over Sin with its Law, and Death comes to be swallowed up of Life; so by a faithful Continuance in the Lamb's War against Sin, the certain Knowledge of a real Victory over Sin, Hell, Death and the Grave comes to be witnessed: And you are of the Host of Heaven, listed in the Heavenly Army, under the Banner of Love, and Standard of Righteousness which is lifted up, to which many yet shall be gathered, and Nations shall flock unto. So you whose Names are written in Heaven, under the blessed Conduct of Christ Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, O follow him fully, follow him whithersoever he goes; if he cause thee to go through the Vail of Tears, or Death, pass on thy Journey with him, be not weary of the Journey which the Lord of Life leads thee in, and he will remove every high Mountain in thy Way that stands before thee, and make it a plain, and bring thee

thee to the End of thy Journey, and if thou meet with Frowns, or Hatred from Profeſſors, or prophane men of this World, thy Neighbours, Acquaintance or Kindred in the Fleſh; it is but that which Chriſt Jeſus the Captain of our Salvation met with, when he came in that Body prepared for him to do the moſt great and Nobleſt Act of Love that could be done to Mankind, in laying down his Life as a Ranſom for all: How was he frowned upon, and hated of the World? And he ſaid, *his faithful Followers ſhould be hated of all Nations for his Name Sake.* How was he hated in his taking Fleſh upon him, and in that Appearance by the chief Prieſts, and zealous profeſſing *Jews*, who were zealous for the Law and Letter, ſo much that they thought to have Eternal Life in the Scriptures; they inſtead of owning and coming to Chriſt, did more then the prophane frown upon him, hate him, and ſet themſelves againſt him, and without any Cauſe refuſed to come unto him, deſpiſing and rejecting him, of whom they might have had Life and Salvation, and when thou meets with any Sufferings for the Name and Teſtimony of Chriſt, wait low in God's pure Fear, & ſeriouſly conſider Chriſt Jeſus ſuffered inwardly & outwardly for thee; he was a man of Sorrows & acquainted with Griefs for thee, that knew no Sin, that thou mig'ht'ſt be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him. Is that known as the good Effect of Chriſt's Sufferings for thee, in all thy Hardſhips, Tryals and Sufferings thou meeteſt with for his Teſtimony in this preſent World? that thou art made the Righteouſneſs of

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God in Christ Jesus, thou art awakned in his Likeness, now then thou shines forth as a Son of God, or as a fixed Star in the Firmament of his everlasting Power, giving Light unto others: Hath the Awakening Power of God thus awakned thee to Righteousness, and true Holiness? O then happy art thou! then thou art not like the men of this World, thou beareſt not the earthly Image, but art an Heir of the World to come, and beareſt the Image of the Heavenly, and haſt a certain Evidence of that Birth which is immortal born, and art come to be a man of God, now thou art made ſtrong through the Power of his Might, and haſt paſſed the Child's State of Weakneſs and Infirmity, and going on to Perfection, and thou art come to him, in whom is the Fulneſs of the Godhead bodily, and art coming to a compleat State a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus.

Here is the Mark, Dear Friends, which God by his Light, at our firſt Convincement ſet before us, to preſs after and to attain unto, and not to come ſhort of it, God never ſet it before any for that End, never to attain to it on this Side the Grave, as the vain talkers of it do imagine and talk, promiſing themſelves Peace whileſt they ſee not, nor know not this Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus, nor how to preſs towards it, or through believing to attain unto it, for they are ſo far from believing attaining to Perfection, or to a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus, in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily, that you know they long have pleaded for, and ſtill plead for Sin and Imper-

Imperfection, and the carrying about of a Body of Sin with them whileſt they live, and that heavy Load and Burden of Sin with its Body, renders all ſuch unprepared and unfitted to run the Race ſet before them; hereupon many ſettle on their Lees, and are ſo ſettled, that they ſeem regardleſs, and ignorant of that which would unſettle them from their Lees of Iniquity, and ſhake the Body of Sin they carry about with them, & make them put it off, and caſt it from them, as that which hinders them from coming to the Truth, to receive it in the Love thereof, and therefore Profeſſors & prophane in many Places ſeem ſo much to be given over to ſtrong Deluſions to believe a Lye, and the falſe Prophets propheſie Lyes in the Name of the Lord, keeping People in Death, and in the Broad Way that leads to Death, and keeps them in Death from the Life of the Son of God, from the Image of God, and from a pure and perfect State in Chriſt Jeſus, whieh God hath brought you into, and made you Partakers of; Glory, Everlaſting Glory and Dominion, be given unto him forever and evermore, who rides on conquering and to conquer. This you Children of the Day are Witneſſes of; this your Eyes have ſeen. O you have handled the Word of Life, you have hid it in your Hearts, how ſweet hath it been to you ſince you came to know and obey it? you have valued it as a Pearl of great Price, you faithful Followers of the Lamb, you have ſo prized and valued the Word of God, Chriſt Jeſus, appearing and working in you, that you have been made willing by his pure

Power to ſell and part with all for him, and to deny your ſelves, and take up and keep in a daily Croſs, that you might follow him whitherſoever he goes.

And Dear Friends, who are called of God out of *Egypt* and *Babylon*, to follow the Lord in his Leadings, let nothing hinder your going forward in following the Lord, let nothing which you may meet with in your Travail in your Heavenly Journey hinder you, or weary you; let no Perils diſmay you, of what kind ſoever; neither let any of you faint when Trials, yea great and fiery Trials happen to you; look not to that which would diſcomfort you in your Travail, whatever it be, or from whomſoever it comes, that which would diſcourage or diſcomfort you, look over it all, to the Rock Chriſt Jeſus; look unto him who ſaved and delivered you, and was your only Helper in the time of your greateſt Diſtreſs and Need; that had Compaſſion on you, and heard your Cry, when you cried to him and no Eye pitied you. I beſeech you all dear Friends, look unto him, and ſee that you look not out, nor go not out from the Way of Truth, becauſe of any Hardſhips, Tryals or deep Exerciſe, that you may meet with in the Way; for then a Vail comes over the pure, and the Face of the Covering ſpreads it ſelf over ſuch again, and ſuch ſuffer Loſs in their Conditions, therefore whatſoever Hardſhips, Exerciſe, Trials or Suffering any of you may meet with in the Way, love and delight in the Way of God, & be not offended at the Way of Truth, becauſe of the Tribulations that do attend it, and them that walk in it, to the Kingdom of God, but

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conſider, that *through many Tribulations the Kingdom of God is entred and come into*; its not entred by Eaſe in the Fleſh, and ſhunning all manner of Fiery Tryals and great Tribulations, as the Careleſs and Diſobedient Children would have it. You have read or heard of the *Patience of Job*, in all his Afflictions and Sufferings, how *Patience did poſſeſs his Soul, that notwithſtanding all the Evil Intreatments of his Friends, and the many Aſſaults the Devil made at him, yet* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God with Folly:* My *Dear Friends and Brethren*, we have need of the *ſame Patience* in our heavenly Journey, where we meet with many Jeopardies and Perils, and the Devil as ready to aſſault, tempt and winnow us, as ever he was; ſo we have need to keep in the Faith and Patience, and to wait upon the Lord, that he may ſtrengthen us, that he may help us; for in vain is the *Help of Man*, or *Arm of Fleſh*, that will fail all that look at it for Help; *but the Lord will never fail us that eye him, believe and truſt in him; he hath been and is a Shield unto us; he hath not left us when we have met with Diſappointments from men, and Perils amongſt men; but he hath ſtood by us, and ſtrengthened us, that have been given up to wait upon him, and truſted in his Name, and fled thither, that hath been our Safety in the Time of Trouble, and the greateſt Perils we have had, looking to the Lord God, we have Joy in abundance, and Encouragement enough to go forwards in the Way of God, to walk without any Weariſomneſs, and to run without Fainting in our Minds, or being ſtopped in our Progreſs, which we have made in following the Lord:* Now he goes before us, he hath led us on by the

Right Hand of his Power, that we might not faint in any Tryal or Suffering inward or outward; and have we not felt the Lord to uphold us, by his free Spirit? O! have we not felt the Lord at our Right Hand, so that we have not been moved when sorely beset on every side, and Enemies within and without, strove against us very much? and cannot you all say, who have been kept faithful to God, *That the Right Hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass; it hath turned back the Power of the Oppressor, and broken his heavy Yoak from off our Necks, and brought you out of Thraldom and Captivity, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God?* and in this we are to stand fast out of all Entanglements and Yoaks of Bondage whatsoever, that would any wayes Imbondage the pure Seed or Spirit of God in us, which ought to have its Liberty in Male and Female, as the Power thereof is felt to stir and work in them that believe & obey the Truth; it ought to have its Liberty in what Diversities of Gifts or Operations soever it comes forth, and manifests it self in; it ought not to be quenched or stopped in any of the Lord's People; so will the Love of God in and amongst us increase, and the heavenly Rejoycing be witnessed in the Hearts of the Upright, that truly seek the Advancement of the Gospel, and the flourishing State of the Church of God.

O *Dear Friends*, let Brotherly-Love continue, let nothing in that would hinder your Love, Dearness and Nearness in the Truth, which is so precious and of such exceeding Concernment to us, that we cannot be well without it, nor safe out of the Love of God;

God; and we do not manifeſt *our* ſelves to be Diſciples of Chriſt, but by loving one another, and being tender over one another, Watching over one another for Good, and the keeping down all that which is contrary, as it appears and would get up, under any Pretence, to hinder the pure and precious Unity of the Spirit, which hath been and is the Bond of our Peace, as any thing of that would ariſe, that would hinder Brotherly-Love, give not way to it, but by the Power of the Lord God keep it down, as that which is not for the Well-fare of the Body, but brings Suffering upon the Members thereof, and ſo a Suffering may happen to the whole Body, if there be a Decay of Love, or want of Love in ſome of the Members of the Body, one towards another, Iniquity will be let in and from thence cometh Whiſperings, Back-bitings, Talebearings, Complainings and Murmurings, and Harbouring of Evil one againſt another, which ought not to be; for theſe things ſtir up Strifes and unprofitable Contentions, whereby the Weak may be hurt, and the Lame turn'd out of the way rather then reſtored, and all are not of a like Strength or Stature: Some are but weak in the Faith, and very little, whoſe weak hands had need to be ſtrengthned, and their feeble Knees confirmed, yet Babes in Chriſt and know the Father, and their Sins forgiven them for his Name's ſake; others are come further to the State of Fathers, not only begotten to God themſelves, but Begetters of others to God alſo by the ſame Spirit and Power by which they were begotten, who are come to know a larger Meaſure of Faith given to them of

God

God, through which they are made ſtrong, and able to bear Burdens, and to bear with the Weak; the Weak muſt be born with; you that are ſtrong ought to bear with the Weak, & not lay heavy Burdens upon them to eaſe or pleaſe your ſelves; for then you are out of the tender Care of Fathers. I have alwayes found the Love and Tenderneſs of a Father towards me, to work moſt in me, and reach the Good, and get up the Good moſt in me, and draw me neareſt the Lord; yet I have ſometimes uſed the Rod, and come to ſome with the Rod, as there was need for it, and as God's Wiſdom leads to it, and I found Love was effectual generally in my own Experience of the Work of God, or as a Workman for him; many have found that to be the ſtrongeſt and beſt Weapon to war with againſt Sin and Evil, that hath wrought in our Members, and warred againſt the Law of the Mind, to lead us captive to that, which was not allowed by us in the Warfare, and a ſore War we have had betwixt Fleſh and Spirit, before we knew how to perform, or were skilled in the performance of that which is good in Words and Actions. There is a Time of Weakneſs, Inability and Feebleneſs, before we are Fathers, or grown to a Young-man's State in Chriſt Jeſus; there is much to dye unto; there muſt not only be a dying to open, prophane, groſs Evils, thoſe muſt not only be ſlain, but ſpiritual Wickedneſs in High Places; the Rulers of Darkneſs, and every thing that would exalt it ſelf againſt the Appearance of God in us, muſt be warred and wreſtled with, and it muſt be conquered and ſlain; then we appear as ſtrong in the Lord, and know the

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Wicked One overcome; then the Proud Man dyes to his Pride, the Covetous Man to his Covetouſneſs, the Self-conceited Man dyes to his Vain & Self conceits he hath had of himſelf; then the Strong Man will not glory in his Strength, nor the Rich Man in his Riches, nor the Wiſe Man in his Wiſdom. And they that come to the Truth, and grow in it, the Power of Truth will quench the Fiery Paſſions of ſuch as are ſoon Angry.

And Friends, as you grow in the Truth, Weakneſs, Childiſhneſs and Imperfection you will all come out of, you will all grow out of, and wholely dye unto, and the Toſſings will be over, and the Tempeſts will ceaſe, and you will all come to, and be eſtabliſhed in that Reſt that is glorious, and be kept in perfect Union with God, and one with another.

And let all Raiſers of Evil Reports, and Broachers of them, be found out and checkt, ſo far as it tends to ſtir up Strife, and cauſe Diviſion in the Church; let ſuch be marked, and avoid them, as not worthy of having Fellowſhip with, that they may be aſhamed that are found to raiſe up an Evil Report againſt any of God's People, or ſowing of Diſcord amongſt Brethren, buſying themſelves in hearing Evil and ſpeaking Evil: Do not judge one another upon Reports, before the Report be fully ſought into, and found out to be true; then let Judgment go forth according to Goſpel Order, that Sin may not remain upon thy Brother, nor thou to put a Stumbling-block in thy Brother's way, to cauſe him to ſtumble, by the reporting that which is falſe, and

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judging him thereupon: That Judgment, paſſed upon Falſe Reports, will return back upon ſuch as give it. The Judgments of the Lord are true, and there is no Unrighteouſneſs in them; he judges nothing but what is for Judgment: and that which is for Judgment ought to be judged, where-ever it appears. I would not have that ſpared in any particular, which cauſeth Diviſion in the Church of God; for that weakens themſelves, and hurts others.

Tale-bearers work againſt the Truth, and may weaken ſome Members in the Church; but that Work communicates no Divine Strength to the Body nor any Member thereof: for my own particular, I never could well digeſt ſuch, ſince I had any Knowledge how to put a Difference betwixt Good and Evil.

Therefore, *Dear Friends and Brethren,* I exhort you as a Brother in Love, All to follow the things that make for Peace, follow after Righteouſneſs, and feel the Righteous Judgments of God to take place upon all that which is contrary to God in every particular: O live in Love, & be at Peace one with another: Love thinks no Evil, ſpeaks no Evil, carryes no Tales or Evil Reports; it ſuffers long, and hopeth all things, and beareth all things, and vaunteth not it ſelf, nor is eaſily puffed up. God Almighty keep you all ſtedfaſt in the Love of God, and one another. You know, Love is of God, and that you ought to dwell in it: O! dwell in Love, then you dwell in God, and cannot hurt one another, nor can do nothing againſt the Truth, but for it; then there is not many Maſters, nor ſtriving for Maſtery, nor many Minds, but all in the

the one Mind of the Lord, and he alone exalted, and of one Heart in the one Spirit, minding the ſame things, and cleaving to and following whatſoever things are lovely, honeſt and of good report; then thou wilt be one with the Flock of God, in all theſe things, that tend ſo much to the Honour of God, and keeping all ſweet and ſavoury, and wilt mind the Foot-ſteps of the Flock of God, and follow the Lord fully.

And *Dear Friends* every where, Keep up your Meetings in the Name and Power of the Lord God, who hath owned us, and been with us in all our Sufferings for his Name's ſake; let none deny his Name, nor bring a Reproach upon his Name, by any Unfaithfulneſs in any part of your Teſtimony, which you are called to bear for his Name and Truth: O meet together as your former manner was, although ye ſhould meet with greater Tryals and Sufferings then formerly; look not thereat, but look at that Arm and Power of God which formerly ſaved and delivered us, and is able to ſave to the uttermoſt from whatſoever the Devil and all his Agents can do againſt us: For, O how hath the Arm and Power of the Lord prevailed againſt the Power of the Devil, and his working through many of his Inſtruments, that have appeared againſt the Truth of God, and our meeting together in the Name & Power of the Lord! And how have we witneſſed Chriſt Jeſus in us and amongſt us greater then he that is in the World, who as a ſtrong man armed hath wrought in many Profeſſors, Prophane and Apoſtates, againſt the glorious Truth

of God, and our meeting together in his Name, which we have owned, believed in, and born witneſs unto above every Name, and which we know every Knee muſt bow unto! Therefore have many been angry with us, and with great Madneſs and Enmity have endeavoured our Overthrow and Ruin, and to hinder us from meeting together, as our former manner hath been, to wait upon God, and to ſerve and worſhip him in Spirit and Truth, as he requires of us; for this have many been enraged againſt us, and ſet themſelves againſt Chriſt's Appearance in us, and our worſhipping of him in Spirit and Truth; but many of their wicked Devices, which they have deviſed againſt us, hath God confounded and brought to nought; and this our Eyes have ſeen brought to paſs, to the Wo and Torment of many of the Adverſaries of Truth, and us the People of God, who meet together in it.

Therefore, *Dear Friends*, be you all incouraged to meet together in the Fear of the Lord, ſitting down together in the Heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus; ſo as you have felt, you will more and more feel, *his Name as precious Oyntment poured forth*; and he will anoint you with freſh Oyl, and you will be made Partakers with him of his Joy and Gladneſs; and let no Backwardneſs or Careleſneſs, nor a ſleight Eſteem appear in any of you, in meeting together: For that Spirit that would cool thy Love to, or any wayes leſſen thy eſteem of the Meetings of the Saints and People of God, where they meet together in his Name and to do his Will, this ſpirit is not of God,

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but it is of this World, and is for Condemnation, wherever it appears: So be you Stedfaſt, alwayes abounding in the Work of the Lord, that youmay ſtir up the Gift of God in one another, and edifie one another, and help to build up one another in the moſt holy Faith, and ſo ye will confound the dead Faiths, and be Inſtruments in the Hand of the Lord, to make void the Evil glorying of them who are in the dead and unholy Faiths, that work not by Love, nor do not ſtand in the Power of God, but are made up by the wiſdom of Man, and ſtand therein; all ſuch will be manifeſt more and more, and their works of Envy and Oppoſition to be for the Fire; a Dreadful Conſuming Fire is kindled to the utter conſuming of the Dead Unholy Faiths, that men have deviſed, with the Fruits thereof; and the living Faith, that was at firſt delivered to the Saints, and the Fruits and Works of Righteouſneſs, wrought in God, muſt come over all the Dead Faiths and Works of Unrighteouſneſs of the Man of Sin, the bad Worker, that works in all the Children of Diſobedience, and the Beaſt with his many Heads and Horns, and the Falſe Prophet that ſtirs up the Beaſt, with his Horns, to puſh at the faithful Followers of the Lamb, muſt be taken and given to the Burning Flame, and the Lamb and his true Followers ſhall have the Victory over the Beaſt, and over his Mark, and the Number of his Names; and the Lord, that hath begun this great Work, and carried it on bleſſedly, and ſucceſſfully will compleat and finiſh it, to his own Glory and Praiſe; *To whom be all Glory, Honour and Praiſes, for he is worthy for ever and evermore.* Amen.